

Juniper Hill School

# **Pupils' Personal Electronic Device Policy**



*Kindness   Enjoyment   Achievement*

## **Contents:**

### Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Ownership and responsibility
4. Acceptable use
5. Unacceptable use
6. Cyberbullying
7. Searching pupils
8. Accessing and storing data
9. Sanctions
10. Monitoring and review

## Statement of intent

Mobile phones, tablets and other personal electronic devices have become widely available and accessible to pupils.

Juniper Hill School accepts that personal mobile phones and tablets are often given to pupils by their parents to ensure their safety and personal security, but understands that such devices pose inherent risks and may jeopardise the learning environment.

As a school, we must strike a balance between personal safety and a suitable educational setting. We understand that parents may wish for their child to carry a mobile phone for their personal safety, whilst pupils may wish to bring additional devices to school for other reasons. This policy establishes how personal electronic devices should be used by pupils in school to ensure both personal safety and an appropriate learning environment.

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

-  Mobile phones
-  Personal digital assistants (PDAs)
-  Smartwatches
-  Handheld entertainment systems, e.g., video game consoles, iPods
-  Portable internet devices, e.g., tablets, laptops
-  Wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems, e.g., devices used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture and/or recording, sound recording, and information transmitting, receiving and/or storing

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and good practice guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

-  DfE (2026) 'Mobile phones in schools'
-  DfE (2024) 'Behaviour in Schools'
-  DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
-  DfE (2022) 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school'
-  Data Protection Act 2018
-  The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
-  Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
-  Protection of Children Act 1978
-  Sexual Offences Act 2003

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

-  Anti-bullying Policy
-  Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
-  Child-on-child Abuse Policy
-  Complaints Procedures Policy
-  Data Protection Policy
-  Online Safety Policy
-  Records Management Policy
-  Relationship Policy / Behaviour Policy
-  Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
-  Social Media Policy
-  Staff Code of Conduct

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing body will be responsible for:

-  The implementation of the policy and procedures.
-  Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
-  Ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds.
-  Reviewing the policy.

**The headteacher will be responsible for:**

-  Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
-  The day-to-day implementation and management of the policy.
-  Communicating this policy to the relevant staff members and the wider school community.
-  Communicating what devices can be brought to school and when they can and cannot be used.

**Staff members will be responsible for:**

-  Being vigilant about incidents of cyberbullying working in conjunction with the senior leadership team in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Relationship Policy / Behaviour Policy.
-  To enforce the school policy and ensure that children do not bring in device.

**The DSL will be responsible for:**

-  Liaising with and reporting the relevant information to children's social care and/or the police, in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

**Pupils are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy.**

### **3. Ownership and responsibility**

Pupils are responsible for their own belongings. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing property that is lost, stolen or damaged either on school premises or travelling to and from school, and at school events.

Staff will be protected against liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to personal devices that have been confiscated as an appropriate sanction, provided that they have acted lawfully.

Pupils and staff should enable a personal PIN or passcode on all the devices they bring to school to protect their personal data, images and videos in the event that the device is lost, stolen or accessed by an unauthorised person.

### **4. Acceptable use**

Mobile devices will not be used by children in any manner or place on the school premises. Unless express permission is granted by a member of staff, mobile devices will not be used to perform any of the following activities whilst on school grounds:

-  Make phone or video calls
-  Send text messages, WhatsApp messages, iMessages or emails
-  Access social media
-  Play games
-  Watch videos
-  Take photographs or videos
-  Use any other application during school lessons and other educational and pastoral activities

Children in Years 5 and 6 who travel to school and unaccompanied are permitted, if absolutely necessary, to have a non-internet enabled 'brick' phone so that they can be contactable. These must be given to the office at the beginning of each day, stored securely and returned at the end of the school day. Pupils will not be permitted to use their mobile phones throughout the course of the school day under any circumstances.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils to use their mobile phones in specific circumstances, e.g., to monitor a medical condition via an app or if they are a young carer.

### **5. Staff Use**

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present. Mobile phones must not be on show during contact times. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where children are not present (such as the staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance, in emergency situations in school, to allow for the completion of the additional security verification of websites and cloud-based sites such as CPOMS, MyConcern or Gmail or during school trips.

The Juniper Team communicate via WhatsApp. The staff are only permitted to send and respond to WhatsApp message below and after school and during break and lunchtimes.

Staff members are not permitted to use their mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day.

Juniper Hill School has an SEMH Unit, the staff in the Unit are permitted to use their phones, in front of the children during lesson times for URGENT communication with the Leadership Team, when there is a dangerous, unsafe situation.

## **6. Cyberbullying**

Incidents of cyberbullying will be dealt with and reported in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy. This includes text messaging, WhatsApp any other channel through which children communicate using technology, whether this occurs in or out of school.

As part of the school's ongoing commitment to the prevention of cyberbullying, regular teaching and discussion about online safety will take place as part of PSHE and Computing lessons.

## **7. Searching pupils**

School pupils have a right for their private life to be respected under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). This right is not absolute, and the school can interfere with this right as long as it is justified, proportionate, and aligns with the powers to search in the Education Act 1996.

All searches will be conducted in line with the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.

The headteacher, and other authorised staff members, will have the power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item. Mobile phones and similar devices will be deemed as prohibited items that may be searched for in line with the Behaviour Policy.

In all cases the authorised member of staff will always:

-  Seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search.
-  Ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted.
-  Give the pupil the opportunity to ask any questions so that their agreement is informed.
-  Have due regard to the DfE's 'Searching, screening and confiscation' guidance.

Staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers. Staff conducting a search must not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing - outer clothing means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin

or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear and includes hats, shoes, boots or scarves. Possessions means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control - this includes desks, lockers and bags. The staff member conducting the search must be the same sex as the pupil being searched. A witness to the search must be present; this should also be a staff member of the same sex as the pupil being searched.

A staff member may ask a pupil to show them what they are doing on their mobile phone or tablet if they reasonably believe that the pupil is using the device to cause harm. If it is judged reasonable, the staff member may inspect the files or data on a pupil's electronic device.

If a search uncovers a device that is being used to cause harm, or which contains prohibited material such as pornography, a staff member will confiscate the device. If a staff member finds child pornography, it must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to check their electronic device.

## **8. Accessing and storing data**

Downloading and accessing inappropriate websites and data on school-owned electronic devices is strictly prohibited.

Storing and using the personal data of any pupil or member of staff for non-work-related activity is strictly prohibited.

All data access requests will be handled in line with the school's Data Protection Policy.

## **9. Sanctions**

Any pupil caught acting in a manner that contradicts this policy will have their personal electronic device confiscated until Friday afternoon. If the device is taken on a Friday, the confiscated device will be returned the following Friday.

Confiscated personal electronic devices will be locked away securely in the headteacher's office.

Confiscated personal electronic devices will be collected by the pupil's parent / carer.

Bullying via personal electronic devices will be dealt with in line with the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

Mobile phones will be confiscated if they are seen, heard or used during the school day unless a pupil has been given permission.

## **10. Monitoring and review**

This policy is reviewed annually by the headteacher and DSL.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to members of staff, parents and pupils by the headteacher.